



Using Web-enhanced Technology to Assess Student Achievement

Why go this route?

- To speed use of student achievement data for curricular decision-making.
- To take multiple measures of student achievement on state standards.
- To enable schools to use real time data for school improvement planning.

You'll know you've arrived when...

- School leaders can describe your school's technology capacity.
- Policy makers are familiar with the advantages and disadvantages of using fixed tests or computer adaptive tests, and have chosen their path.
- Real time data is used to plan and/or modify instructional design and delivery.
- Web-enhanced formative assessment is commonly used at all grade levels.

Construction Zone

- Using technology makes the collection and analysis of data much easier. Teachers do not have to create or grade the tests.
- Schools need a sufficient number of computers available for on-line testing. The ability to test an entire class at one time increases the ease and length of the testing cycle.
- Teachers must feel comfortable using technology.
- Someone (staff member or committee) must be willing to take the lead in facilitating use of technology and maintaining the data.
- Computers that are on-line are at-risk of viruses and worms. Technical support and virus protection are of importance and will require additional resources.

It's about TIME


- Each company includes its own guidelines for the amount of professional development the contract will contain. Extra funding may be necessary if your training needs exceed the vendor's estimates.

Potential COSTS

- Cost will vary based on the vendor selected. Most offer a yearly site license based on the number of students.
- Computers must be made available.

The Process

*A step-by-step guide to
deciding about and selecting
a vendor of web-based
assessment technology.*

NOTE: Steps marked with a  are accompanied by one or more inserts, included in this packet.

- 1 Investigate the benefits** of using web-enhanced technology for assessing students.

INSERTS A-C for Step 1 offer three articles for getting acquainted with the issues. Use the enclosed Technology Glossary pages 19–25, if needed. Continue this discussion until your technology team is comfortable that all of its questions have been answered.

- 2 Complete an inventory** of existing technology in the building/lab. This document will serve as the foundation for discussions you'll initiate later with vendors.

INSERT for Step 2 is a template for questions you'll want to answer about your current situation.

- 3 Inform stakeholders** that you're investigating this option. Share with them your own learning so far, and collect questions they have.

We did not reproduce it in hard copy, but the MI-Map disk or website contains a sample brochure you might use with staff, PTA, parents, students or community members to introduce the possibility.

- 4 Poll the staff members** who will be involved in using the technology to learn their level of computer usage and comfort. Identify those who will welcome and use the technology.

INSERT for Step 4 is a Teacher Computer Survey which asks staff to rank themselves from 1(low) to 5(high) on several aspects of readiness.

- 5 Score the survey** to determine your collective readiness to make use of a technology investment like this one.

Total points per participant. A score of:

50–40 points: Adequate comfort level to begin. Program specific professional development needed.

39–20 points: Moderate degree of comfort with technology. Professional development should review basic computer skills, then move on to program specific training.

19 or less: Little comfort using technology. Begin with basic computer training. Program-specific training should be put on hold until level of comfort increases.

- 6 Make a decision** about the specifications you'll "shop" for

This includes getting policy makers to choose between fixed-item and computer-adaptive approaches to assessing student achievement.

- 7 Investigate vendors** and compare their products to your specifications.

INSERTS A–E for Step 7 provide comparison summaries of prominent vendors used by other Michigan schools. All information provided is deemed reliable, but is not guaranteed and should be independently verified.

Getting more mileage from using web-based assessments

How web enhanced testing systems can help your school in regard to the following initiative:

No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

- Real-time data about which standards, benchmarks and expectations have been mastered, and which need more work could help form strategies for increasing student achievement.



Resources

Websites

Additional articles on replacement costs, professional development, and connecting to the web can be found online at the links below.

[www.classroomtcocosn.org/
checklist/replacement_costs.html](http://www.classroomtcocosn.org/checklist/replacement_costs.html)

[www.classroomtcocosn.org/
checklist/prof_dev.html](http://www.classroomtcocosn.org/checklist/prof_dev.html)

[www.classroomtcocosn.org/
checklist/connectivity.html](http://www.classroomtcocosn.org/checklist/connectivity.html)

People

Specialists

Most Intermediate School Districts have a specialist working with schools on technology use in their service areas. Some offer computer classes.

Coaches

The *Alliance for Building Capacity in Schools* website lists coaches whose training has been provided by Michigan State University and supported by the Michigan Department of Education. Some are active in school improvement implementation in Michigan schools. Please visit:

www.abcscoaches.org

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